

Consultation free text responses

Responses (where answer was no or blank)

Do you support the proposal for Buckinghamshire to adopt National Funding Formula principles from 2018/19?

1. The proposal clearly disadvantages the approx. 30 primary schools with under 100 pupils in Bucks. This was admitted at the roadshows. Smaller schools budgets are finely balanced and ANY reductions will have an impact. With the information [REDACTED] School received we estimate a reduction of possibly £2K, but it could be more. School running costs pay, utilities etc. are increasing. This is not the time to decrease budgets. The outcome for small schools does not look promising and the result could well be schools failing. Sadly, I believe the decision is probably a done deal and small schools will have to look to join a MAT or could end up in the long run closing.
2. As a small school consisting of [REDACTED] pupils, we are disadvantaged vs all other primary and secondary schools. This is evident in the table comparisons in the consultation document. This is as a result of the reduction in the 'Lump Sum' which is given to all schools. This is not recovered from the increase in AWPU as it is for larger schools.
3. As a small school we are disadvantaged vs all other primary and secondary schools as a result of the reduction in the 'lump sum' which is given to all schools. This is not recovered from the increase in AWPU as it is for larger schools.
4. As a small school with less than 100 pupils on roll the cut to the lump sum of £16,400 will have a negative impact even with other increases. [REDACTED] School stands to lose £5,218.61 in 2018/19. This is unfair. The school will be in deficit. There should be a cap to loss as is proposed for capping gains. Schools that have low achieving pupils are rewarded. Schools who have done our best on the limited budget we already have to support our most vulnerable pupils to achieve well will expected to do this on even less funding. The cut from £850 FSM to the proposed approx. £450 is morally wrong.
5. As Chair of Governors of a very small school I cannot support a formula that disadvantages the school when others are gaining significantly with potential increases of 15 %. BCC appears to have no clear policy on the future of small schools yet appears to have a shortfall in school places. I believe there is possibly some scope to increase funding via High Needs Block and also that strong representations need to be made to government
6. From the information provided there remains a lack of transparency about the how the minimum funding commitment from Justine Greening of at least £3500 per primary pupil in 2019-20 is realised at BCC schools.
7. I am concerned about the impact on small schools. My school only has [REDACTED] pupils and any lump sum drop will impact our already over stretched budget. If Bucks wants to keep its small schools it needs to find a way to provide for them, Adopting the National Funding Formula now does not allow us time to plan for the future. We need a more gradual approach.
8. I'm not sure the funding will support the school set up in Bucks. Many schools are small with few pupil premium children thus any shortfall from the minimum funding which will happen, will not be made up with other streams as happens in town schools.
9. It is extremely disadvantageous to small schools. More notice of the roadshows required. First I heard of them three had already happened. Extremely poor communication.
10. Lump sum reduction has had a significant negative effect on the school budget. Alternative funding streams will not make up the shortfall in a small school such as ours.
11. NFF means that our school will have a reduced budget share. In a small school even a small increase has a far reaching effect. Building, IT and staffing costs rise year on year I question how we can manage these

when we are already managing a very tight budget i.e. no supply teachers, very little CPD, parents buying resources and stationery

12. Small Primary Schools seem to be relatively disadvantaged
13. The current proposal is detrimental to small schools. With only [REDACTED] pupils, we can not secure adequate funding with this new proposal.
14. The impact of the lump sum reduction will have a significant and catastrophic impact on our allocated budget. The other increases will not compensation for this.
15. The new formula disadvantages small primary schools. As a school of [REDACTED] pupils, we do not therefore support any aspect of the proposal.
16. The proposed lump sum reduction will have a significant and catastrophic impact on our budget. £16,000 is a phenomenal amount of money to a small school and by reducing the lump sum significantly it makes me question what the future looks like for small schools such as ours.
17. The reduction in lump sum for smaller schools will greatly affect our ability to manage and balance our budget going forwards. As a school we can have very low numbers and the increase in per pupil funding does not cover the shortfall that we will have.
18. Whilst in principle, I think it is fairer than there is national formula which is fairer to all authorities [as Bucks are currently one of the lowest funded authorities], for our school the reduction in lump sum together with very small pupil numbers [REDACTED] means that we stand to make a substantial loss.

FOSS response

Following the round of Bucks CC information evenings, I am writing as the secretary of FOSS to express our deep concerns about the huge impact the national funding formula is likely to have on small schools, particularly those schools with less than 100 pupils.

I believe the following information to be correct, that under the DfE Proposal, the Lump Sum will be reduced to £110k from £126k. In theory, schools should gain as the AWPU increases by £101 to £2747 for primary schools. However, for small schools, the increase does not make up for the lump sum grant drop, as there are insufficient pupils to raise the amount needed. To lose £6-£10k per annum from 2018 will seriously threaten budgets and staffing in small schools if these proposals are adopted in full. These proposals will come at a time when bursars of many small schools' are already working exceptionally hard to avoid an in-year deficit for the end of 2017-18. Meanwhile, I believe that some secondary schools with few pupils (or none) with low attainment are going to be 15% better off in 2020/21 under the National Funding Formula.)

There are 50 Foss schools in Buckinghamshire which accounts for 27% primary schools in Bucks. 58% Foss schools have pupil numbers less than 100. This is a significant number of schools in the county. We do hope that it is not your intention to cause these schools to wither and die, when many of them provide outstanding provision for their pupils. The need for school places I believe is rising across the county. Should these small schools close, this could cause untold amounts of finances to be spent on larger schools to build extensions to house these pupils. There could also be increased costs for school transport to enable these children to attend their nearest local school which will then be further away from their front door.

I believe there is some wriggle room within the High Needs Block Funding quota and would ask that whatever decisions are made with regards to the national funding formula, that you please take into account the long term viability of Bucks small schools who provide quality education for Bucks children.

Do you support the proposal to phase in local funding formula rates over the next 2 years?

Primary

- A clear look at how all schools are affected should be done before it is introduced.
- As a significantly underfunded school (£█████ per child this financial year). We would like to see a full transition to the MFG to enable us to provide the level of education and support our children deserve. Over the last years given our level of funding compared to Bucks and National schools we have been forced to embark on ████ redundancy programmes and a major cost cutting exercise.
- For our school we will be disadvantaged if it is phased in, so we would like full implementation as soon as possible (maybe over 2 years not 4). However, we recognise the constraints on the LA to ensure that no school is left with a major reduction in funding in the short term.
- In addition to the comment for Q5 there appears to be a discrepancy between the Government timing of 2019-20 for the £3500 minimum funding commitment and the BCC timing of 2020-21. It is not clear why BCC is withholding this for another year.
- The new formula disadvantages small primary schools. As a school of ████ pupils, we do not therefore support any aspect of the proposal.
- There is no clear justification for continuing to withhold what has been identified as minimum amounts due to each pupil.
- This will have further negative financial implications for all small schools as we lose which ever phased approach is used, due to cut in lump sum of £█████.

Secondary

- Again I think we should be focusing on the 'National' funding formula. Government funds have been allocated for this, not to cover local deficiencies.
- No – this is my school's answer, although my understanding is that there is no option other than to phase in the change.
- No, however our understanding is that BCC is saying that the funding allocated does not allow full implementation in 2018/19 and therefore there appears to be no option other than to phase in the change.
- There is no clear justification for continuing to withhold what has been identified as minimum amounts due to each pupil.
- We can see the practicality of applying the scaling factor to all elements of the formula the MFL level should not be included in this because it continues to delay the correction of the historical underfunding of the worst funded schools.
- We don't understand the reference here to local funding formula rates. We should be talking about the 'National' formula and we believe that schools should be benefitting from the additional government funds as soon as possible
- Need the small primary issue sorting first
- Phased introduction does not alleviate the problems caused by funding shortfall, it simply delays them.

- The current proposal is detrimental to small schools. With only [REDACTED] pupils, we can not secure adequate funding with this new proposal.

Do you support the proposal that the cost of protecting schools from decreases in per pupil funding is met by capping gains per pupil in other schools?

Primary

- As above. Schools have suffered years of chronic underfunding. There can be no justification for perpetuating this.
- If the principle of the new funding formula is fair funding, this seems to be counter-intuitive at a local level.
- Reductions to £3500 per pupil should be phased at an appropriate level so not to increase the length of time underfunded schools continue to not achieve the MFG of £3500
- The new formula disadvantages small primary schools. As a school of [REDACTED] pupils, we do not therefore support any aspect of the proposal.
- The NFF funding consultation has given schools the opportunity to plan for potential changes in future funding. A protection against greater than 1.5% reduction is adequate insurance.
- The whole point of the national funding formula is to address historical unfairness I cannot see why it would be fair to continue to prejudice against those schools by effectively reducing their funding. The net effect of which would likely be the increase in academisation and decrease in schools utilising Bucks education support services.
- This continues to prolong the unfairness in the system leaving under-funded schools disadvantaged longer.
- We will most likely not have enough money to put forward a balanced budget next year. We have very few EAL or disadvantaged pupils. We have few pupils that meet the postcode criteria so our money is mainly from pupil funding. We need as much per head as possible.
- I am unable to answer as I do not know what impact this will have on Marlow CofE Infant school. I don't know if the school is more at risk from decreases in per pupil funding or being capped for gaining.

secondary

- Absolutely not. There is no reason why we should not be receiving the same Minimum Funding Level as similar schools across the rest of the country (not county). We have suffered from years of historic under funding (during which time we have all had to make significant cuts to our provision) and I would consider it very unfair to cap our funding now
- As above. Schools have suffered years of chronic underfunding. There can be no justification for perpetuating this.
- No – we would like to believe that schools have been aware of these changes for a while and have started to make the changes necessary to adapt to their new financial reality, given the cuts / difficult decisions that many schools have had to make following years of under-funding.
- No. Schools have been aware of these changes for some time. We should be receiving the same Minimum Funding Level as similar schools across the rest of the country. We have had years of historic under funding during which time we have had to make significant cuts to our provision and it is unfair and unreasonable to cap our funding now.
- The basic per pupil funding level is just that. Capping gains prevents levels being reached that will significantly affect the education of the young people in our care. With Buckinghamshire being a significant

beneficiary to increased funding levels, this should be passed to the Schools. Capping will only delay the impact of the movement of the funding from the LA to Schools in 2020.

- There is no reason as to why we should not be receiving the minimum funding levels as other similar schools across the country. We have suffered from historic levels of underfunding and have had to make significant cuts to survive. We should not have our funding capped now.
- There is no reason why we should not be receiving the same Minimum Funding Level as similar schools across the rest of the country (not county). We have suffered from years of historic under funding (during which time we have had to make significant cuts to our provision) and it is unfair to cap our funding now
- There is no reason why we should not be receiving the same Minimum Funding Level as similar schools across the rest of the country. We have suffered from years of historic under funding (during which time we have had to make significant cuts to our provision) and it is unfair to cap our funding now
- To support schools in Bucks we are happy to work together to help them but feel that as this County has traditionally been so poorly funded over many years, we should not supporting those other schools nationally, most of whom have benefited over many years from higher funding.

unknown

- It is my view that schools which are currently arguably over-funded should not be protected from the requirement to save money. Protecting their levels of funding inevitably restricts the funds available to those schools that are underfunded.
- It is not right that some schools receive less than the minimum funding level
- Need the small primary issue sorting first
- Only if it doesn't further detriment smaller schools.
- There is no reason why we should not be receiving the same Minimum Funding Level as similar schools across the rest of the country (not county!). We have suffered from years of historic under funding (during which time we have all had to make significant cuts to our provision) and it is unfair to cap our funding now
- This delays the correction of malign anomalies. Managing state funded school finances always involves hard choices. Just get on with it. I have in the past served on the Resources Ctee at [REDACTED]. I was Chair of Finance and Personnel at a small (under [REDACTED] pupils) and shrinking Bucks Primary for a few years - not a rest cure but not impossible. .
- While we recognize the importance of stability of funding it should not be at the expense of fairer levels of funding for underfunded schools.

Do you believe the proposals will support the strategic aims of the Authority?

Primary

- All schools need to at least stay the same. With this structure many will lose in real terms.
- Although there is reference in the introduction to the priorities in the draft strategy there is no explicit link to the proposals and it is certainly the case that allocation of more money is no guarantee of effectiveness.
- Clearly there is still much to do in Bucks re supporting pupils with High Needs and disadvantaged pupils. The LA and schools have a moral responsibility to support the needs of these pupils and this will only happen if £1.5m is transferred to the High Needs Block for each of the next two years. Anything less would be a clear dereliction of duty.
- From what I am aware of but not all aspects clear.
- Given there is a lack of detail about the strategic aims at this point, I feel I am unable to comment positively on this at the moment.
- How confident are BCC that esp High Needs Block grant will ensure that schools can access support sooner. SEN support inc EP is especially vulnerable
- I believe that the aims of the LA in all the small schools will be greatly hindered by this change to the lump sum. I for see [REDACTED] setting a deficit budget, which we have worked hard to avoid to this point. Many, if not the majority of small schools already set a deficit budget. How can changes that will lead to more schools being in that situation be supportive of any strategic aim? With the proposed cut to lump sum, [REDACTED] will be significantly less well placed to 'realise our ambitions for children and young people in Buckinghamshire'.
- I think I could have a good guess at the strategic aims of the LA, however I think we would all benefit from these being articulated more widely and more frequently.
- I think that the strategy of supporting those most in need is important and we need to work as an authority to narrow the gap.
- I think the Local Authority will always struggle with closing the gap while it has selective schools. I would like to know what the Local Authority strategic aim for small schools is?
- If the LA wish to continue keeping small schools open then the proposal to reduce the lump sum does not support the strategic aim. However if the LA want to close small schools then it does. I was under the impression that the LA wanted to keep small schools open and we have been fully supported in our transition from an infant to a primary school. However even when we are a primary school we will have under 100 pupils therefore the impact from the lump sum reduction will always have an impact on our budget.
- It is impossible to see how the LA's priorities can be served by withholding minimum funding from one group of children in order to delay addressing historical funding problems for another group.
- It provides a framework for individual schools to develop their own strategies and be given sufficient funds within overall availability.
- It still remains that there is insufficient funding to deliver fully.
- lack of clarity of and aims and strategy to achieve aims given by local authority
- Money is not the answer to everything, we need to ensure that social and family support services as well as NHS continue to provide their support and do not leave it to schools to pick up the pieces. There seems to be a strong correlation between families in trouble/home life and a pupil with 'issues' at school which place a burden on staff to the detriment of other pupils. Joined up thinking and action is key.
- Only if the SEN service is restructured and made fit for purpose
- Partly - it's hard to tailor a national formula against specific local objectives. The strategic aims of the authority will ultimately be met by how schools use the funding that they are given, rather than being driven

by national factors. Bucks should closely monitor schools' spending against the local authority's objectives to provide evidence on how the objectives are being met.

- Please see comment below re SEN
- The new formula disadvantages small primary schools. Is this part of the strategic aims of the Authority?
- The proposals demonstrate Bucks CC as local authority is working to distribute funds to schools as fairly as they are able. However, the overall funding available remains insufficient and as such the local authorities hands are tied.
- The proposals do support the strategic aims but do rely on schools buying in to supporting the transfer of monies from school block to high needs block.
- There's not enough money in the system to fully support the strategic aims but making this move will take us towards this.
- This depends on how efficiently BCC make use of any funds they retain. Current performance, e.g. in SEN services and support, makes me question this. I am uncertain whether the poor level of service currently offered is solely due to financial reasons.
- This question is unclear- the strategic aims are outlined in the document. Does the question infer that the phased introduction of the MFG will be used as a 'top slice' to achieve the strategic aims of BCC?
- Unclear how the proposals will support all the strategic aims of the authority. There seems to be an awful lot to achieve with very little extra resources.
- Yes, but concerned about the High Needs Funding and SEN funding requirements still not being able to be fully met.
- You state that you wish to deliver high standards and excellent results plus being inclusive for pupils with SEND. We can't do this with NFF as we would have less money than we do now. The infrastructure of our school needs urgent attention yet we cannot and will not be able to invest in it, therefore another priority that we won't be able to work towards.
- (blank)

secondary

- Actually, the answer is probably yes but this is for BCC to answer not us schools!
- Given the breadth of the strategic aims this is a very difficult question to answer specifically.
- I am unable to answer this question. Many schools are, however, struggling to resource their own strategic aims
- Impossible to answer this question as even though I am a member of BASH and the Schools' Forum, I am not aware of the strategic aims of the authority. Sarah Callaghan has made great efforts to communicate her intentions, but these have not been formulated as strategic aims at this point
- Increased funding to schools (so long as it remains "disposable" and isn't simply eaten up by increased per capita staff costs or other overheads) should enable all schools to do more to meet students' needs. However, we were surprised and disappointed that there was no explicit reference in the consultation to selection and the impact of selection in the secondary sector. Several thousand children are currently being taught in secondary schools that are less than good in Buckinghamshire, all of them non-selective. We do not understand why it is not an explicit strategic objective of the Council both to address this situation, and to ensure that all non-selective schools have the continuing support and resources they need to meet the particular challenges they face.
- It is impossible to see how the LA's priorities can be served by withholding minimum funding from one group of children in order to delay addressing historical funding problems for another group.
- Many of the strategic aims are funded by other blocks and funding streams. The challenges of the attainment gap provide a moral and ethical debate around the equity of education in Buckinghamshire. The Schools mostly affected have done amazing work to address the gaps in attainment, however these gaps are

evident prior to the transition to the Schools affected. The gap needs to be addressed but we are unsure the evidence exists that more money has had the desired impact so far.

- No - The strategic aims are not specific or concrete enough to be able to accurately predict if the proposals will support the strategic aims of the Authority. The Authority doesn't appear to have come to terms with the academies programme and how it can work with, rather than against academies. Examples in [redacted] case are: the LA sending out letters to parents promoting UTCs whilst [redacted] are improving their reputation but still not at capacity; school place planning do not seem to be able to balance the need to support [redacted] growth, which in turn will be beneficial to all in the [redacted] area, allowing other schools to grow whilst [redacted] has space is a misuse of money and/or perpetuates the under-allocation of students to [redacted] and financial issues which in turn means that [redacted] will take longer to be a school of first choice; the Authority is correctly looking at the high levels of money being spent on SEND but this needs to be considered with other factors too (e.g. high levels of exclusion for SEND students) and putting more stress into the system by taking away specialist provision and expecting schools to manage this with too few resources is not a sensible solution; the reality is that some students need specialist provision and placing them in mainstream without the resources to support them will disadvantage both them and other students.
- The authority does not appear to have come to terms with the academies programme and how it can work with, rather than against academies. For example, within our own Trust, the Local Authority sends letters to parents promoting UTCs and school place planning supports growth in some schools at the expense of others. The authority is appropriately considering the continuing high level of SEND-related expenditure, however with no real plan for how to reduce the overspend. We appear to be being asked to subsidise a significant overspend on HN through our own, limited, budgets. This is avoiding the structural problems which underpin the overspend. Spending more will not solve the problem.
- The authority doesn't really have strategic aims that inform its actions. The NFF does increase the amount spent on vulnerable students so to that extent any aims
- The new MFL will produce large gains to schools with low levels of low attainment and large numbers of pupils thus not necessarily targeting all the need to the right schools.
- There would appear to be a risk that there is insufficient overall provision for SEN but the Authority appears to have done everything that they can within the overall budget allocation to address this.
- Underachievement in identified cohorts of vulnerable students is acknowledged within the LA. The new formula does not allow SFs to target funding towards these 'locally unique' groups.
- Unsure of the impact of the proposals.
- We don't feel we can realistically answer this question
- We hope that the strategic aims are reviewed again as the determination of the Local Authority is to maintain selection at 11+. Therefore non selective secondary schools should be additionally funded to support the polarization of the issues that this causes.
- Yes - as an Authority we have supported the very smallest uneconomical schools for too long. They have not necessarily provided the best educational opportunity for students and this has been at the expense of secondary schools which have been underfunded. The School Forum choice of Lump Sum funding all schools at such a high level has further exacerbated this. This is a correction which is very much overdue.

(blank)

- . Increased funding to schools (so long as it remains "disposable" and isn't simply eaten up by increased per capita staff costs or other overheads) should enable all schools to do more to meet students' needs. However, we were surprised and disappointed that there was no explicit reference in the consultation to selection and the impact of selection in the secondary sector. Several thousand children are currently being taught in secondary schools that are less than good in Buckinghamshire, all of them non-selective. We do not understand why it is not an explicit strategic objective of the Council both to address this situation and to

ensure that all non-selective schools have the continuing support and resources they need to meet the particular challenges they face.

- Any change that has a detrimental effect on my school's funding is not supported.
- Having read the strategic aims for education and young people, it would be difficult to say "Yes", while clearly any move by central government to increase funding in Bucks must support those aims in broad terms.
- I am not fully aware of the Strategic Aims of the Authority
- I am unclear what the strategic aims are!
- I can't say for sure one way or another, as I do not know the strategic aims
- I don't feel that we have a very clear view of what the strategic aims of the Authority are.
- If county wish to continue keeping small schools open the proposal to shrink the lump sum does not support county strategic aims.
- If not supporting small primary schools is part of that aim?
- If the authority wish to continue to support small schools within the county this is at odds with the planned changes and real term cuts in funding
- Increased funding should be helpful to all. However, the 'strategic' part of the document does not make explicit reference to selection, one of the key strategic positions taken by this LA.. Given the long-term difficulties experienced by the non selective secondary schools, the LA needs to have proposals that will address the challenges faced by these schools.
- It is fair that there are enough funds for every school and therefore student in the county.
- Money is not the answer to everything, we need to ensure that social and family support services as well as NHS continue to provide their support and do not leave it to schools to pick up the pieces. There seems to be a strong correlation between families in trouble/home life and a pupil with 'issues' at school which place a burden on staff to the detriment of other pupils. Joined up thinking and action is key.
- Need the small primary issue sorting first
- Not clear what the aims are.
- Partly. Increased funding to schools(so long as it remains "disposable" and isn't simply eaten up by increased per capita staff costs or other overheads) should enable all schools to do more to meet student's needs. However, we were surprised and disappointed that there was no explicit reference in the consultation to selection and the impact and the impact of selection in the secondary sector. Several thousand children are currently being taught in secondary schools that are less than good in Buckinghamshire, all of them non selective. We do not understand why it is not an explicit strategic objective of the council both to address this situation and to ensure that all non selective schools have the continuing support and resources they need to meet the particular challenges they face.
- Sadly BCC still follow the selection by exam system that in this day and age is not really appropriate
- Small primary schools will not be able to deliver the required services with the cut in the lump sum. Also the secondary schools with lower prior attainment end up with less growth in funding than secondary schools with higher prior attainment this will cause financial issues for the former as they will be unable to deliver the services required for the lower attaining pupils
- Small schools tend to be village based and are a focal point. An authority aim is to Create Opportunity and Building Self Reliance in strengthening local communities. With the real danger of school closures, the impact is very real for small communities eg less revenue in local shops and is counter intuitive to this aim. I do think the proposal favours urban areas in Bucks.
- Strategic aims should provide not only for an increase to the per pupil spend, but also should provide for the capital expenditure needed to both catch up on historic maintenance backlogs and to provide for the necessary improvements to the school infrastructure.

- The approach is mostly reasonable but there is not enough money full stop, The country has a critical shortage of employable and adaptable school leavers (even without Brexit). The attainment gap has to be addressed for average Jo (m/f) without starving the needs of the able or the country cannot compete in a harsh world.
- The proposed strategy does not address the historical problems of under performance in Bucks non-selective secondary schools. The consistent high proportion of non-selective secondary schools rated by Ofsted as level 3 or worse and the high attainment gap are just two examples. These failures result in parents and pupils having a poor negative perception of these schools. The non-selective schools are seen as providing an inferior education with fewer resources and opportunities for the children who attend them. The strategy should prioritise efforts to increase the educational outcomes of the non-selective schools to equal or exceed the results achieved in the neighbouring comprehensive schools. Parents should have confidence that children attending the non-selective schools are able to progress to the best of each individual's ability.
- with a selective secondary education system in the county, non grammar secondary schools dealing with the majority of pupils will face reductions in funding
- Yes, but concerned about the High Needs Funding and SEN funding requirements still not being able to be fully met.

Which of the following amounts do you think should be transferred from 'Schools Block' funding to 'High Needs Block' funding for each of the next two years?

Primary

£0;

- As a small school we already stand to lose out so further top slicing would have an even greater impact - the model suggests a flat budget for us for the next 3 years not allowing for inflation, salary increases etc.
- As above. Bucks has a well known and long standing over expenditure on high needs. This will continue this for another year. To date we have seen no serious proposals aimed at addressing the problem. Without this it is hard to see this as anything other than a delay to a necessary and inevitable set of actions.
- BCC already spends more money than many neighbouring authorities on provision. The issues are structural and need to be resolved fast. This has been talked about for a long time.
- Bucks already has a generous HNB budget and we are asked every year to put more money in. I would prefer to see it in my budget so that I can use it to provide essential SEN services NOW for the children in my school who so badly need them rather than pour money in to a service that I can't see meeting the needs of the pupils in my school.
- Every year additional requests are made to transfer money from schools block to high needs block. Bucks already has a generous HNB budget but the SEN service needs a serious overhaul to ensure it is fit for purpose and the money is being spent effectively. In two years the budget will be ring fenced and simply asking for more money will no longer be an option. At present it is falling on schools to plug the gap when services which should be provided by the LA are not available (for example Educational Psychology service). Rather than seeing even more money disappear into what seems to be a black hole, I would prefer to see it in my budget so that I can use it to provide essential SEN services NOW for the children in my school who so badly need them.
- High Needs Block has consistently seriously overspent in recent years, which is unsustainable in the current economic climate. School Funding is under pressure and the money needs to be within school budget to maintain the current level of in-house provision for children.
- I believe we will not be able to do this by 2020; so perhaps we should start now. I am also aware that BCC has been able to find money from other sources to pay for projects, that I feel are less deserving than 'high needs block funding'; so perhaps it is time money was found internally to support it.
- The service we currently receive from the SEN Team at the LA is very poor. [in terms of funding and quality/quantity of support]. We are required to meet the needs of challenging SEN pupils [including those with EHC Plans] with very little funding or support from county. I would rather pay nothing towards HNBF as the quality of support is very weak. I would rather manage the budget for this myself and buy in bespoke services of my choosing when required. As a small school, our SEN numbers fluctuate so I would not wish to pay a flat rate to support HNBF for bigger schools when as small school, the new formula is hitting us hardest.
- This funding, which is needed, should not come from the schools block. A lack in funding to schools budgets has led to the increased demand in applications for High Needs Block funding for our SEN pupils.
- This should come out of a central pot. As a small school we often have a higher proportion of SEN children and would struggle to find money to fund this.
- While we support the plans for children with particularly high needs, we are very concerned about what will happen to mainstream schools like ours. Both early identification and moving away from process- to need-based services seem beneficial. However, we have been given no guarantee of any external support (and

with no EHCPs we will have a greatly reduced capacity to demonstrate our need for this support). At the moment, we have seen no Ed. Psych. since 2015 and have no link speech therapist. We need the 0.5% of our budget to supply as much as possible for our children with SEND in house.

£0.5m (0.17%);

- I agree on principle that the Higher Needs Block need investment and that there has to be a fair way to do this. But it is incredibly disheartening that our special school places are given to out of county children when we spend a fortune on our children going to out county schools. We on the flip side cannot get our children into their own special places. Out of a total of 67 children in our school we have 7 children with SEN Support plans, 2 of which need EHC plans. It's not sustainable.
- It is unfortunate that this still has to come out of the Schools Block and isn't a separate funding stream completely.

£1.0m (0.33%)

- See above, I think Bucks need to take action internally to be as efficient as we can in dealing with pupils who have 'issues'.
- This is an area which is difficult to predict apart from the fact that the demands on this budget will increase through pupil need. While the new strategy highlights improvements in financial management and investment, more funding will clearly be needed to meet the increasingly complex needs of pupils.
- Unable to make a decision on this as we have not fared well as a school from applications put in for HNBF.
- We feel this strikes a balance between the role of County and the role of the school to try and avoid the need to involve central resources.
- We support the transfer policy at 0.33% or if it becomes evident that it is needed, at 0.5%.

£1.5m (0.5%).

- High Needs is an important area to be addressed that not committing the right amount will have only a nominal impact upon an individual children outcome at best.
- It is very hard to accept further reductions in funding given the current economic climate. Accepting transfer of £1.5m for each of the next two years is only on the understanding that the exercise will truly build future capacity to plug the holes we have at the basic provision level
- Our school has a disproportionate ratio of High Needs and therefore additional funding would be welcomed.
- see above LA support for high needs pupils in mainstream schools has deteriorated and has to be addressed. The acute shortage of Educational Psychologists is placing huge pressure on schools who often have to manage challenging children without additional support.
- The development of SEND is critical. The relationship between mainstream and special schools needs to be enhanced and fostered. Inclusion with appropriate resources/sharing and training will be beneficial. The alternative will not be good.
- The needs of our most vulnerable pupils mean that it is logical to provide the funding they require by this transfer of funds. However, Bucks must have a long term, strategic view as to how high needs spending can be drawn into line as schools cannot continue to be expected to transfer funding from the schools block indefinitely.
- There is a need for increased high needs funding to enable schools with high levels of children with SEND, with and without EHCPs to be able to fund the staff/resources to meet their needs. Schools are currently underfunded in this area
- This is a vital area and SC and BCC are aware of issues in the SEN team- this funding will provide a sticking plaster but not fundamentally change the organisation as is needed

- Uncertain of the implications of this position. Taking money from the schools block to the HNBF block does not create additional funding for schools / pupils with needs, it robs Peter to pay Paul and therefore either way presumably leaves the schools as a collective fundamentally under-funded.
- With the gap of 4m over 2 years and with the authority committing 1m then the schools block will have to commit 1.5m/year to cover the remainder. Hopefully the work reducing the 9m cost of SEND transport and the 15m of out of county placements means that by the time that the formula is fully implemented those savings will more than cover the shortfall. It is vital that if we are being supportive now, the actions of the authority rise to meet the challenge or that it is agreed that the full amount be funded from authority funding after the full implementation of the NFF

secondary

£0;

- As above. Bucks has a well known and long standing over expenditure on high needs. This will continue this for another year. To date we have seen no serious proposals aimed at addressing the problem. Without this it is hard to see this as anything other than a delay to a necessary and inevitable set of actions.
- County have failed to supply details of any plan to address this overspend. This fundamental overspend was created by the local authority who have failed to address it over a number of years. I do not feel that schools should be asked to contribute to this from their own budgets when there is no plan to bring this spending under control in the future.
- No details have been provided as to how County intend to reduce the fundamental overspend in High Needs funding. It seems odd that we are effectively being asked to bail out a significant overspend on HN through a transfer of funds from our own budgets. (We would certainly not be afforded this luxury in our own school's budgets) This is avoiding the structural problems which lie at the heart of this overspend. Spending more will not solve these problems. County is looking to transfer the maximum amount allowed by government (i.e. 0.5%, which = £1.5million). I suspect most of us would think that any transfer should be significantly less, or even zero
- The local authority has not provided any of the information required by the DfE so cannot make a case for needing a transfer of funding.
- The overspend in the High Needs Block is a very long standing problem in Buckinghamshire. We are of course very sympathetic to the needs of children with SEN, however without seeing a clear and credible strategic plan to address the overspend, we cannot agree to vire money away from the budgets of schools that will still be hard pressed financially, despite the increase in funding this year.
- There are three reasons for not transferring SB funding to HNB funding. 1. No one has been able to explain clearly, if at all, how schools would benefit from transferring SB funding to HNB funding. 2. The SEND Strategy 2017-20 correctly identifies a link between historic low funding for Bucks schools and the much higher than average cost of SEND, because schools have had no option but to fight for HN funding to deliver anything like the level of support the students deserve. 3. There are no plans to increase capacity in special schools, but rather to transfer the responsibility for specialist provision to mainstream schools without the appropriate resourcing.
- There are two reasons for not transferring 'Schools Block' funding to 'High Needs Block' funding. First, you do not set out what how schools would benefit from the reduced income and second, the Special Educational Needs and Disability Strategy 2017-2020 correctly identifies a link between historic low funding for Bucks schools and the much higher than average cost of SEND, one reason being because schools have had no option but to fight for High Needs funding to deliver anything like the level of support the pupils deserve. Plus, as above, the Authority is correctly looking at the high levels of money being spent on SEND but this needs to be considered with other factors too (e.g. high levels of exclusion for SEND students) and putting more stress into the system by taking away specialist provision and expecting schools to manage this

with too few resources is not a sensible solution; the reality is that some students need specialist provision and placing them in mainstream without the resources to support them will disadvantage both them and other students.

- This may seem an extreme response, however, the debate on High Needs funding has been ongoing for many years. Schools have supported this area consistently but whilst also tackling budget decline. Even so, High Needs appears to have the same funding gap as in previous years and evidence that this has been addressed is not prevalent. Greater work is required to High Needs, but not to the detriment of pupils as a whole.

£0.5m (0.17%);

- Bucks CC must get a proper plan for High Needs underway - the current £18 m being spent on 260 students is not sustainable and I support the Schools Block funding being ring-fenced
- No details have been provided as to how County intend to reduce the fundamental overspend in High Needs funding. It seems to me that we are effectively being asked to bail out a significant overspend on High Needs through a transfer of funds from our own budget. (We would certainly not be afforded this luxury in our own school's budgets!) This is avoiding the structural problems which lie at the heart of this overspend and I fear for what will happen in Year 3 (i.e. 2020/21). Transferring funds now is simply putting off inevitable (and admittedly hard) decisions in the future. This is a problem which needs to be addressed with structural change now; simply spending more will not solve these problems.
- The budget should encompass all strands and we should not be in a position of subsidising for SEN, either for the Local Authority or within our school. Appropriate funding to meet the needs of all students should be a top priority.
- We recognise that schools have a duty to assist and try to alleviate pressures that the Council are facing in this area. However, the Council should have, as part of its medium term planning over the last 4-5 years built in some resilience to deal with their statutory duty within resources without moving funding from Schools Block year on year. By not doing this the Council could have found itself in the position where that funding would have had to be found from reserves, had a hard national funding formula been introduced. The Council should be more than matching the funding it is taking from Schools Block from its own budget.
- We would like assurances and considerations to this High Needs Block funding to be re-invested in mainstream schools where there is a requirement for significant investment and them being supported adequately, as opposed to the current levels.

£1.0m (0.33%)

- Although we have large alternative provision costs on an annual basis we have no High Needs Funding allocation in our budget allocation from the EFA. We also have a large number of SEN students drawing upon our resources and needing different interventions whereas a lot of secondary schools do not have the same issues to the same degree. The concern is cuts to this provision will have to be considered if funding decreases.
- LA should use £1m DSG reserves, 2 years of £1m from schools block and find the rest from efficiency savings or elsewhere. If the next 2 years were fully funded by £1.5m/year from schools block and DSG reserve, there is less incentive for the LA to make efficiency savings in HNBF expenditure before the full implementation of NFF.
- Maximum. HN has to live within its means - there is a cliff edge coming in two years that the LA need to acknowledge; where will the funding shortfall be sourced from?
- We agree that schools should support the High Needs Block and transitional arrangements are necessary, especially as Bucks has some significant issues with SEN provision. We have gone for the £1m option but, if this is not the winner, we would transfer more rather than less.

£1.5m (0.5%).

- The demand for High Needs provision is growing, whether provided in mainstream schools or in specialist schools such as [REDACTED]. The services provided at the moment are close to capacity and showing signs of strain, and all schools benefit from their continuing existence both in terms of providing education for excluded pupils and for their valuable outreach work which acts to prevent or delay permanent exclusions. Increasing investment in this service will relieve pressure on mainstream schools.

Blank/ unknown

£0;

- £0. The overspend in the high needs block is a very longstanding problem in Buckinghamshire. We are of course very sympathetic to the needs of children with SEN, however without seeing a clear and credible strategic plan to address the overspend, we cannot agree to steer money away from the budgets of schools that will be hard pressed financially, despite the increase in funding this year.
- Children with special educational needs deserve to have systematic support. Shoring up a system that is not working effectively helps no one. It does not secure support for the most needy and creates additional needs in the mainstream sector. There is no evidence of any strategic approach to this problem and until there is, I cannot support the movement of money away from mainstream schools. The Council should meet its commitments to SEN children by drawing from other financial sources.
- Don't understand the question. I would some explanation as to what these terms mean.
- Every year additional requests are made to transfer money from schools block to high needs block. Bucks already has a relatively generous HNB budget but the SEN service needs are not adequately supported. In two years the budget will be ring fenced and simply asking for more money will no longer be an option. We would like to see this addressed now rather than coats along for a further two years. At present it is falling on schools to plug the gap when services which should be provided by the LA are not available (for example Educational Psychology service). We would prefer to see this money in our budget so that it can be used to provide essential SEN services now for our children who so badly need them.
- Having read the SEND strategy, the clear direction of travel is that pupils with more complex needs will have to be educated in mainstream settings. Therefore, schools will need every penny to support those pupils. Also, despite the fact that the overspends in the SEND budgets have been occurring for some years, I was unable to ascertain exactly what is going to be done to get the budget under control from the strategy document, so throwing good money after bad does not seem sensible.
- I am concerned "High Needs" is not running efficiently and we are being asked to bail out a significant overspend on HN through a transfer of funds. This would not be the case if the overspend was within secondary schools. This risks avoiding fixing the structural problems which lie at the heart of this overspend. Spending more will not solve these problems.
- I do not believe that the Bucks schools that are seriously underfunded can afford to forego any of the potential additional funding.
- I don't believe sufficient details have been given for me to assess this but certainly transfer of money between these two blocks seems unfair.
- I would support a transfer if this was then to be re-allocated to schools. Schools are struggling to meet the costs of supporting rising numbers of pupils with SEND and they need additional funding to make this provision.
- Schools are increasingly under pressure to provide support to SEN pupils whilst receiving very little additional funding. In a school having more than one pupil with an EHC plan can have a massive affect on our budget. Support Services are currently patchy at best and non-existent in other areas. To remove some

more of our budget to support SEN would greatly affect our ability to manage the school budget to provide support for all pupils.

- The arbitrary figures here present no impact information etc. and so no choice can be made between them. The higher needs block funding system is already failing to provide agreed support in a timely manner creating budgeting problems.
- The funding formula model indicates that our school will have a flat budget for the next 3 years and hence we will struggle to cope with inflation increases, salaries etc. Hence at this time we would like the money to stay in the main schools pot.
- The overspend in the High Needs Block is a very long standing problem in Buckinghamshire. We are of course very sympathetic to the needs of children with SEN, however without seeing a clear and credible strategic plan to address the overspend, we cannot agree to vire money away from the budgets of schools that will still be hard pressed financially, despite the increase in funding this year.
- There is no explanation of any clear plan showing what the funding is intended to achieve. Any proposal requiring schools to fund this suggestion has to be accompanied by a detailed plan that can be evaluated by schools before they agree to fund the plan.
- There is no explanation of any clear plan showing what the funding is intended to achieve. Any proposal requiring schools to fund this suggestion has to be accompanied by a detailed plan that can be evaluated by the schools before they agree to fund the plan.

£0.5m (0.17%);

- Despite the certainty of appearing callous, I nearly put £0. It is more important now to spend most of what is available on those who clearly will be able to make an economic contribution than to have a warm glow. If we support the economy now. there will be more available in the future (admittedly for different people).

£1.0m (0.33%)

- I personally do not like to see differential funding, segregating non selective schools from the apparently higher capital need and spending 11 or 12+ selective schools is wrong. No matter where any school sits in the achievement or aspirational run of things all should be treated equally.
- See above, I think Bucks need to take action internally to be as efficient as we can in dealing with pupils who have 'issues'.
- We are unable to make a proper decision not knowing what the impact will be, but we feel there are is enough in the Higher Needs Block and it takes too long to receive an allocation of funds.

£1.5m (0.5%).

- I'd like to see investment so that in the long term bucks has capability to support our children and their families locally, and eventually offer a service to out of county children.
- Subject to review once small schools relative disadvantage is overturned.
- Various school costs such as cleaning, heating, employing caretakers, maintenance, staffing, employing a SENDco are far higher per pupil in a small school than a larger one. There are additional higher costs for smaller schools such as oil versus gas, transport to activities such as swimming, covering EHCP compulsory hours. It would seem this proposal is ignoring some of the most vulnerable schools in the area, which are already struggling.
- Without funding SEN provision only get worse